

Sub B2 Cont
4. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein all of the articles of the set positioned at the printing station simultaneously whilst the printing apparatus is moved transversely across all the lanes.

5. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the articles are conveyed severally in their respective lanes, to the printing station, and are arranged to be present at the printing station so that the printing apparatus may be moved into registry with the articles and printing performed, whilst the printing apparatus is continuously moved.

6. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the printing apparatus includes a housing mounted on the carriage, and print head movement to and from the printing position is relative to the housing of the printing apparatus.

7. (Amended) A method according to any claim 1 wherein the print head is of the kind having a plurality of printing elements which are selectively actuated during printing by a control means to effect printing of desired information on each of the articles.

8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the printing apparatus is a thermal printer in which there are printing elements arranged in a generally linear array along the print head with the array extending generally transversely to the direction of movement of the printing apparatus across the lanes, the method including selectively energising the printing elements during printing to remove pixels of marking medium from a carrier positioned between the printing elements and the article.

9. (Amended) A method according to claim 8 wherein the method includes moving the carrier relative to the print head as the printing apparatus moves transversely of the lanes of articles during printing, so as that fresh carrier is continually be positioned between the print head and the article on which information is being printed.

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10. (Amended) A method according to claim 8 wherein the printing apparatus includes a housing within which there is provided a storage spool for unused carrier, a take-up spool for used carrier, a first motive means to move at least the take-up spool to take up used carrier, and a second motive means to move the print head to and from the printing position.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 which includes conveying the articles of the set in their parallel lanes to the printing station, arresting movement of the set of articles at the printing station while the information is printed on each of the articles of the set.

13. (Amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein the method is applied to printing apparatus having a thermal print head having printing elements which are selectively energised during printing to melt and remove pixels of marking medium from the carrier and deposit the pixels of ink on to the articles.

16. (Amended) A printing station for performing the method of claim 1, the printing station including a carriage, a printing apparatus mounted on the carriage, the carriage being moveable to move the printing apparatus transversely of a plurality of lanes whilst the printing apparatus effects printing on each of a plurality of articles at the printing station, each of the articles being located in one of the lanes, the carriage being moveable substantially continuously across the lanes whilst the printing apparatus prints the information on each of the articles of the set in turn without or substantially without stopping.

17. (Amended) A station according to claim wherein the carriage is mounted on a gantry which extends over the lanes and the printing apparatus is moved the lanes on the carriage.

19. (Amended) A station according to claim 16 wherein movement of the carriage is controlled by a controller which co-ordinates printing with carriage movement.